DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 239 093 CE 037 965

AUTHOR Knop, Sheila A.
TITLE A Profile of Colorado's Adult Learning Needs and Resources.
SPONS AGENCY Colorado Commission on Higher Education, Denver.
PUB DATE Sep 83
NOTE 22p.; Prepared by the Colorado Lifelong Learning Project. Print is small.
AVAILABLE FROM Lifelong Learning Project, University of Colorado, 2608 Avocet Road, Fort Collins, CO 80526 ($2.75).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Access to Education; *Adult Education; Adults; *Educational Needs; *Educational Resources; *Individual Needs; Lifelong Learning; *Needs Assessment; *Participant Characteristics
IDENTIFIERS *Colorado

ABSTRACT

This report summarizes findings of the Colorado Lifelong Learning Project regarding learning needs of Colorado adults and resources currently available to meet those needs. It is divided into three sections. First, demographic and socioeconomic trends along with adult role responsibilities and life transitions that imply learning needs are described. Relationships between individual learning needs and collective learning needs are discussed. Profiles of adults who have a propensity to participate in learning activities are contrasted with profiles of people who are considerably underrepresented in learning activities. Second, learning resources currently available to Colorado adults are examined. Private sector resources are commented on; publicly sponsored resources are described in more detail. Organizational factors that affect adults' access to learning resources are noted. The final section briefly treats implications of this assessment of needs and resources and suggests that policy questions about adult learning services are different than those being asked about youth education. (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED239093

A PROFILE OF COLORADO'S ADULT LEARNING NEEDS AND RESOURCES

September, 1983

CE 037965

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

prepared by:

Sheila A. Knop

Colorado Lifelong Learning Project

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

S Knop

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Colorado Commission on Higher Education:

Michael R. Moore, Chairman
Charles Manning, Interim Executive Director
Timothy M. Grieder, Director of Continuing Education
and Extended Academic Programs

The Division of Continuing Education, University of Colorado-Boulder, serves as fiscal agent for the Colorado Project. The Colorado Lifelong Learning Project was earlier affiliated with the Lifelong Learning Project, administered by the Education Commission of the States and funded by the Kellogg Foundation.

The Colorado Project recognizes and appreciates the efforts of these, and the many other Colorado education agencies, organizations and individuals who have lent support to various aspects of this Project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
THE NATURE AND PREVALENCE OF LEARNING NEEDS	2
Adults in Colorado: Demographic Profiles	2
Regional Distinctions	3
Colorado's Economic and Employment Situation	3
Purposes of Learning	5
Relationships Between Learning Needs of Individuals and Communities	6
Profiles of Typical Adult Students	6
Participation Rates and Patterns	6
ADULT LEARNING SERVICES IN COLORADO: A SUMMARY OF RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS	9
Publicly-Sponsored Learning Services	9
Vocational School, College and University Continuing Education	9
Community Education and Basic Education for Adults	10
Cooperative Extension Service	10
Libraries and Historical Society	12
Programs of Other State Agencies	12
Publicity About Learning Services	12
SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS	13
REFERENCE NOTES	15
OTHER PUBLICATIONS OF THE COLORADO LIFELONG LEARNING PROJECT	17

INTRODUCTION

Over the past three years, the Colorado Lifelong Learning Project has been charged with the responsibility of (1) clarifying issues and problems in the provision of adult learning services, state-wide, and (2) determining state-level policy alternatives which could be used to address these issues and problems. That charge has necessitated reviews of adult learning needs and resources that are currently available to serve adults.

This report summarizes Project findings regarding learning needs of Colorado adults, resources currently available to meet needs, and organizational factors which affect distribution of learning resources. Because state-level policy is the concern of the Lifelong Learning Project, generalized descriptions of needs, resources and organizational factors are presented. More detailed descriptions, useful for policy and program development at institutional and community levels, have been noted elsewhere [1].

The report is divided into three major sections. First, demographic and socio-economic trends and adult role responsibilities and life transitions which imply learning needs are described. Relationships between individual learning needs and collective learning needs are discussed. Profiles of adults who have a propensity to participate in learning activity are contrasted with profiles of people who are considerably under-represented in learning activities.

Second, learning resources currently available to Colorado adults are examined. Private sector resources are commented on; publicly-sponsored resources are described in more detail. Organizational factors which affect adults' access to learning resources are noted.

The final section is purposely brief in its treatment of implications of this assessment of needs and resources. Implications are the subject of a Project publication, "Policy Options Affecting Adult Learning Services in Colorado" [2].

Data and other information for this report have been gathered in several ways. Demographic trends are abstracted from a Project study of 1980 Census data. Economic and employment trends are those recently published by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. Data from a 1975 learning needs survey of more than 5000 Colorado adults are reported. Other insights about learning needs have come from reviews of relevant literature and national studies of adult learners. Descriptions of learning resources and organizational considerations are the result of reviews of agency/institutional reports and personal or telephone interviews with officials of those agencies.

THE NATURE AND PREVALENCE OF LEARNING NEEDS

Surveys and observations of individual adults and their communities, and analysis of demographic profiles and trends have yielded considerable insight about the nature and prevalence of adult learning needs. The studies have suggested topics of relevance to learners. To some extent they have provided insight about the number of adults in need of particular kinds of learning--although need is not necessarily synonymous with interest nor predictive of participation in learning activity. The studies have identified categories of adults that are most likely to take advantage of learning opportunity. Conversely, they have identified adults who, although they may have pressing learning needs, have been seriously under-represented in adult learning activity.

Adults in Colorado: Demographic Profiles [3]

In 1980, 68% of the state's 2.9 million citizens were 20 years of age or older. Sixty percent of Colorado's population were between 20 and 64 years old in 1980, the normal age range of the labor force. There were almost twice as many 25 to 34 year olds state-wide in 1980 than in 1970, and three times as many of that age group in several Colorado counties. In total, Colorado's population grew by 31% between 1970 and 1980, almost three times the national growth rate. During that period, some Colorado counties doubled or tripled in size. Recent in-migrants from other states comprised 20% of Colorado's 1980 population, and as much as one-third of the population of some counties. Since the 1980 Census, Colorado's population growth has continued, albeit at a slower rate. Coloradans are highly mobile. Not only do they move from state-to-state, but also within the state. Only 40% lived in the same house in 1975 and 1980. Twenty-three percent had moved from one Colorado county to another county in the state between 1975 and 1980.

Other changes that have been noted in Colorado, 1970 to 1980, include:

- a more heterogeneous racial and ethnic mix in the population;
- declining family and household size;
- a smaller proportion of married persons;
- increase in the number and proportion of pre-school children;
- increase in the number of families with young and teenaged children;
- marked increase in the number of college graduates and persons with one to three years of college, with 21% of adults (aged 25 and older) having attended some college and another 23% having graduated from college;
- decline in numbers and the proportion of adults with less than 12 years schooling, although 22% of adults aged 25 and older still do not possess high school credentials;
- increases in both nursery school and college enrollments, coupled with slight declines in elementary and secondary enrollments;
- increase in the number of employed persons, disproportionately more than the total state population growth;

slight declines in proportions of self-employed and federal government workers and accompanying increases in the proportion of private wage and salary workers.

1980 Census data substantiate that the majority (71%) of Colorado workers were engaged in managerial, professional, technical and precision production and crafts occupations. Another 12% of Colorado workers were employed in service occupations in 1980, 3% in farming and forestry occupations, and 13% in occupations as machine operators, transport and manual labor. The greatest proportion of Colorado workers were employed in retail and wholesale trade industries (22%) and professional service industries (21%) in 1980. With regard to the type of industry of employment, Colorado had proportionately fewer workers in manufacturing industries than did the nation, 1980, (CO = 14%; U.S. = 23%) and proportionately more workers in agriculture and forestry industries (CO = 6%; U.S. = 4%).

Thirty percent of the Colorado population resided outside urbanized centers or in rural areas in 1980 (U.S. = 38%). Colorado median household income, 1979, was about $1200 higher than nation-wide. Seven percent of Colorado families were found to have incomes below the poverty-line in 1979, about 2% fewer than nation-wide.

Regional Distinctions

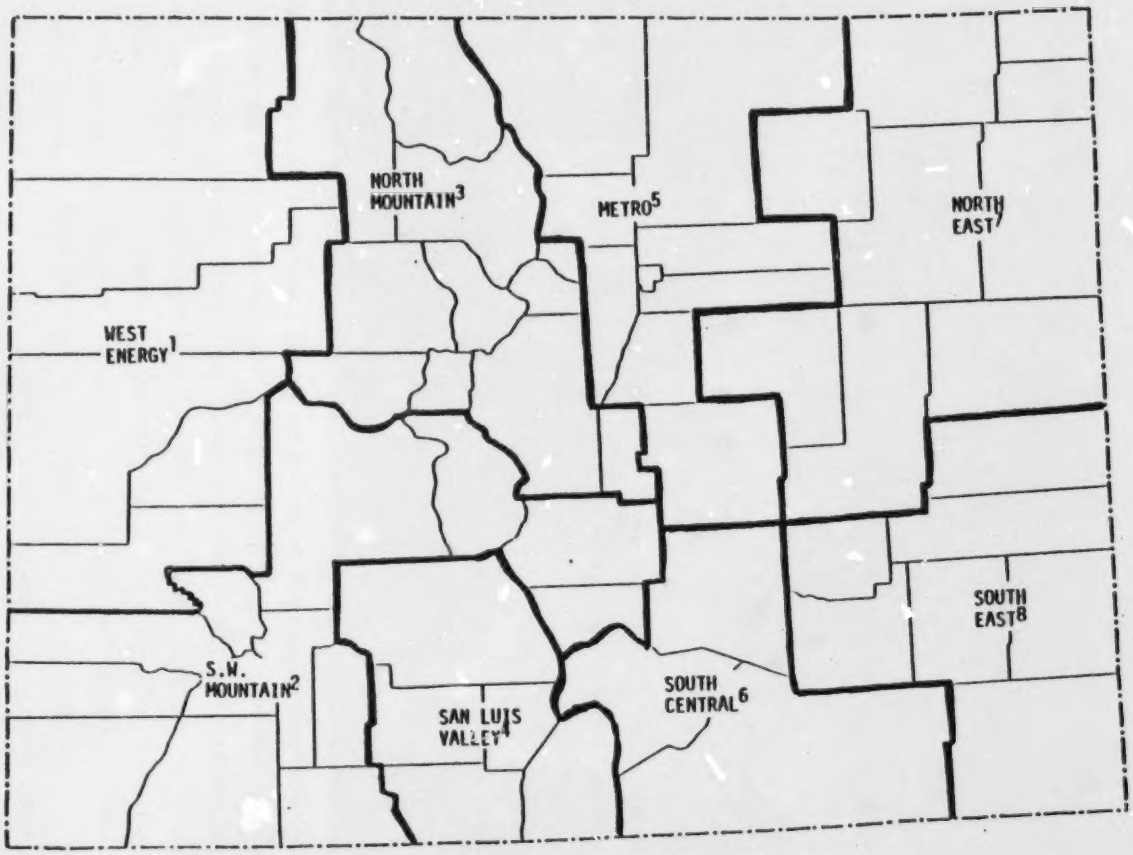
Four of eight Colorado regions (i.e., West Energy, South West Mountain, South Central and Northeast) tend to reflect typical Colorado population characteristics and trends. The other four regions are exceptional in several characteristics. (See Figure 1 for regional map.) Southeast and San Luis Valley regions are typified as rural, less affluent than populations in the other six regions, and with greater proportions of (1) agricultural and government workers, (2) young children and older adults, and (3) adults with less than 12 years schooling. In contrast, two other regions' populations (the Metro region and the rural non-farm North Mountain region) are more affluent than populations in other regions, with greater proportions of (1) managerial-professional and technical specialty workers, (2) young-to-middle-aged adults, and (3) college graduates.

Limitations. It is not yet possible to cross-index population characteristics of individuals (e.g., age by income by educational attainment) because 1980 Census data are not fully accessible. It would be useful, for example, to know ages, labor force participation, occupations, race, location, ethnicity and incomes of Colorado adults who have completed fewer than 12 years of schooling, and to compare their characteristics with adults who have completed more schooling. This information would give more complete understandings about adults who are frequently referred to as under-educated, and would be helpful in establishing service priorities among the under-educated and other segments of the population. Census data will be available for this type of analysis later this year, and a Colorado Commission on Higher Education project will provide additional insights and implications of demographic profiles and trends.

Colorado's Economic and Employment Situation

The state's economy has suffered during the national recession and because of international events which affected oil prices and related energy development. Three years ago, energy development activities caused

Figure 1. The State of Colorado as Comprised of Eight Multi-County Areas.



1 West Energy counties = Delta, Garfield, Mesa, Moffat, Montrose, Rio Blanco.

2 S.W. Mountain counties = Archuleta, Custer, Chaffee, Delores, Fremont, Gunnison, Hinsdale, La Plata, Mineral, Montezuma, Ouray, San Juan, San Miguel.

3 North Mountain counties = Clear Creek, Eagle, Gilpin, Grand, Jackson, Lake, Park, Pitkin, Routt, Summit, Teller.

4 San Luis Valley counties = Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Rio Grande, Saguache.

5 Metro counties = Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Denver, Douglas, El Paso, Jefferson, Larimer, Weld.

6 South Central counties = Huerfano, Las Animas, Pueblo.

7 North East counties = Elbert, Kit Carson, Lincoln, Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Yuma.

8 South East counties = Baca, Bent, Cheyenne, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero, Prowers.

significant "boom town" impact in several rural areas on the West Slope and associated business and financial activity in the Denver metropolitan area. In the past 12 to 18 months major lay-offs and suspensions of mining and related activity have occurred. Several West Slope and South-Central Colorado communities still suffer from these impacts. Front Range emphasis on electronics industries and light manufacturing plants has been confounded by effects of the recession. Colorado's desire to be a leader in the post-industrial era, through a strong economy driven by high technology continues, nevertheless.

Together, these trends yielded steady increases in unemployment, which peaked at 9.1% in February of 1983. Since February, labor conditions appear to be improving slowly. Seasonally-adjusted figures for May, 1983, showed that 7.6% of the Colorado labor force were unemployed (U.S. rate, May = 10.1%), but the current Colorado jobless rate is almost 3 percentage points higher than a year ago. In particular, jobs in manufacturing, transportation and public utilities, agriculture and mining have declined [4].

Purposes of Learning

Adult learning needs and interests have been shown to emanate from responsibilities associated with (1) roles adults are expected to perform (e.g., family member, worker), (2) normal transitions adults must make during their lives (e.g., marriage, parenthood) and (3) less predictable disruptions which demand response (e.g., health problems, job obsolescence) [5]. Learning needs emerge when people lack the ability or commitment necessary to perform roles, adjust to life transitions or meet crises. Five adult roles are noted below. With each are examples of role-related expectations and transitions which imply a host of learning needs.

Family member: managing family relationships, household and financial affairs; promoting and preserving family health and security; coping with changing family roles (i.e., spouse, parent, widow, son of aging parents); maintaining and communicating personal, family, social and/or religious values and definitions of acceptable behavior to other family members.

Worker: maintaining and up-grading occupational abilities; preparing for new occupations; meeting demands as supervisor, subordinate and colleague; adjusting to work retirement.

Citizen: understanding American system of government, rights and responsibilities; participation and leadership in democratic decision-making; understanding social values and norms and communicating this understanding to youth and community newcomers; coping with and helping to prevent or resolve community problems.

Self: preserving personal health; pursuing self-knowledge, fulfillment, satisfaction and integrity; pursuing avocational and leisure interests; maintaining a sense of purpose; understanding self in relation to others.

Learner: possessing basic understandings and academic abilities (e.g., communication, computation, comprehension); enhancing reasoning and self-directed inquiry abilities (i.e., seeing distinctions and relationships, nature and causes of problems; knowing ways to solve problems and find and use learning resources).

Relationships Between Learning Needs of Individuals and Communities

Much as individual adults have multiple roles and learning needs, so do communities. "Community" is the setting where people interact with a sense of esprit de corp to negotiate acceptable kinds and levels of service structures, assure equitable access to services, solve community problems and meet challenges of community life and change. The community must learn in order to decide what steps it can take to meet challenges, negotiate differences, and solve problems. Because the adult population has responsibility and authority to make civic decisions, community learning is largely a matter of adult learning, on the collective level.

To make the reality of community learning more concrete and manageable, we can rely on traditions of widespread and representative decision-making. Communities give special responsibility and authority to certain categories of adults, i.e., elected and appointed officials and informal opinion leaders. Officials and opinion leaders, as a group representing the community, have most pressing learning needs--especially when the community faces difficult times. They have need for technical advice and assistance, insights about potential consequences of their contemplated actions, understanding of change processes, and methods to help negotiate differences of opinion among themselves and among lay citizens. As a group, adult lay citizens have similar learning needs, although the depth and breadth of their understanding of issues, technical solutions, and implications of change are not expected to be as great as that of citizen leaders. When citizen learning needs are addressed, more informed debates can take place in public media and meetings, and referenda and electoral decisions are more thoughtful and representative [6].

Profiles of Typical Adult Students

At any given point in time, we cannot expect all adults and all communities to have need for or interest in learning projects. Several studies are available which provide information about adult participation rates, and also help to distinguish learners from non-learners. They give clues about potential demand for services, and reveal several categories of adults who are under-represented as learners. Because of the size of under-represented groups, their socio-economic situations, and their relationships with the larger society, the provision of learning services for them presents special challenges.

Participation Rates and Patterns

According to a national survey, 49% of the adult population was engaged in learning activity at the time of the survey or had studied in the past 12 months [7]. Other surveys have revealed higher or lower instances of adult learning, dependent on definitions of terms as "learning" and "participation" [8]. Of those 49% in the national study who had engaged in learning activity in the previous 12 months: the greatest proportion (37%) pursued occupationally-related learning; 22% studied topics as crafts, fine arts, leisure activities and sports; 14% were involved with family-related learning activities; 11% studied religion or ethics; 7% were found to be pursuing academic subjects; less than 1% studied "citizenship"; and 10% studied a variety of "other" topics [9]. Most often, people were found to be studying a topic that related to a life transition they were making (e.g., new job requirements triggered work-related learning) [10]. Twenty-eight percent of

the people engaged in learning activity reported that they studied completely on their own, without the assistance of any institution. Employers were noted as the most frequent providers of learning services, with 17% of the students receiving formal or informal instruction in the work environment. Fourteen percent of the students took advantage of four-year college or university resources, 12% were involved with private instruction, 8% with religious institutions, 7% with community or junior colleges, and 7% with local school districts. To a lesser extent, people took advantage of resources of community agencies, professional associations, correspondence schools, area vocational schools, and television, radio and newspaper [11].

Adult students can be divided into two partially over-lapping categories--those who participate in professionally-directed learning activities and those who direct their own learning efforts. Characteristics of people who tend to belong to one or the other of these categories, along with those of people who are not well-represented in either category, are described below.

Participants in professionally-directed activities. Professionally-directed learning activities are those which are planned and guided by professionals. They are usually offered in classroom fashion for groups of learners, although tutorial programs are also included. Participants may receive academic credit for their effort, but often do not. Examples include learning activities offered by community education programs of public schools, college and university continuing education divisions and industry training programs.

The Census Bureau's triennial education survey (1978) established that, nation-wide, 12% of all adults were participating in professionally-directed learning activity at the time of the study. Adult groups under-represented in these activities included adults over the age of 55 (4.5%), Blacks (5.8%), persons without high school credentials (3.5%), and persons of lower income brackets (less than $5000 annual family income, 4.9%; $5000-$7499, 6.3%; $7500-$9999, 9.7%). Groups of adults over-represented in organized learning activity included young adults (ages 17-34, 15.7%), college graduates (27.6%), and persons with higher incomes ($25,000 or more annual family income, 18.3%) [12].

A 1975 study of Colorado adults noted that 31% had participated in a "learning program" within the previous 12 months. Of these, Spanish-Americans, low-income adults, adults over 61 years of age, and adults with 12 or fewer years of schooling were under-represented as learners [13].

Participants in self-directed study. Self-directed study involves systematic activity, but rather than being mostly planned and guided by professional instructors, is mostly planned and guided by the learner himself. The self-directed learner may periodically seek tutorial assistance or classroom instruction as part of his learning plan, thereby enlisting professional guidance.

A commonly accepted definition of self-directed learning uses the "learning project" as a measuring unit. The learning project is defined as "a series of related episodes, adding up to at least seven hours. In each episode more than half of a person's total motivation is to gain and retain certain fairly clear knowledge and skill, or to produce some other lasting change in himself" [14]. U.S. and Canadian reports indicate that self-directed inquiry is fairly commonplace [15]. Typically, a self-directed student conducts five such projects each year, and devotes about one hundred hours to each project. Thus, on average, self-directed projects take more time to complete than do three-credit college courses. About three-quarters of all self-directed projects

are completely guided by adults themselves, 15% involve group learning situations, 10% include one-to-one consultations, and 3% involve use of such non-human resources as television, tapes and programmed instructions [16].

While participation in self-directed study is less affected by social class factors than is participation in professionally-directed activity, class distinctions are still evident. Studies have shown that the elderly, non-whites, blue-collar and unskilled workers, housewives, low-income persons, adults with few years of formal schooling, and rural adults with these attributes are less likely to direct their own learning than are other adults [17]. (Comparable data has not been collected in Colorado to determine if it stands as an exception to national studies of self-directed learners.)

Other distinctions: learners vs. non-learners. Additional characteristics tend to distinguish learners from non-learners, regardless of their preference for self-directed or professionally-directed activity. According to a national study, people in business and professional occupations, single non-widowed adults, and adults with fewer than five children were most likely to participate in learning activities. Adults engaged in learning activity were about evenly divided, male and female, although women with children under the age of 18 were more likely to participate than were women with older children. While Blacks were considerably under-represented, Hispanics tended to participate in learning activity proportionate to their representation in the population, Whites were over-represented, and Orientals and American Indians were considerably over-represented in learning activity. Persons living in urban areas were slightly over-represented, while people in towns of 2,500 or less and in rural farm areas were under-represented [18].

Colorado studies have not attempted in-depth analyses of these characteristics of learners and non-learners. In at least one regard, however, it would appear that Colorado serves as an exception to national trends. As noted earlier, participation rates for Colorado's Spanish-American population were found to be lower than those noted in the national study [19]. (The Colorado study did not isolate participation rates of Blacks, Orientals or American Indians, thus it is unclear whether they too stand as exceptions.)

Although many factors influence adult participation in learning activity, the strongest predictor of participation is past educational experience. National studies and a Colorado report substantiate that the more formal education a person has achieved, the more likely he is to participate in further learning. Nation-wide, college graduates are most likely to participate in learning activity, adults with one-to-three years of college or technical school are next more likely, high school graduates next, and persons with less than high school are least likely to continue their learning [20]. These trends hold true in Colorado, with one exception--technical school graduates in Colorado tend to be more likely to participate in learning programs than other studies suggest [21].

ADULT LEARNING SERVICES IN COLORADO:

A SUMMARY OF RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

In Colorado, as in other states, adult learning resources are available through both public and private sector organizations. Examples of private sector resources include: business-industry training and educational programs, labor union and professional association training; commercial and "public" television, radio and press instructional efforts (e.g., how to plan nutritious meals, how to care for lawns and gardens); church-sponsored programs (e.g., religious instruction, marriage enrichment seminars); health and fitness programs of health clubs and organizations such as the YMCA; occupational and general academic programs sponsored by proprietary schools and private colleges; educational efforts of civic groups (e.g., League of Women Voters, VFW, Red Cross, Common Cause). While some resources of private groups are available to the general public, access to most involves affiliation with the organization, through membership or employment.

Publicly-Sponsored Learning Services

Public sector resources are central to this report. Several public institutions in Colorado offer adult learning services. Their programs are summarized below. No judgments about the effectiveness of the various programs are provided or intended. Reporting systems of the program sponsors usually are designed for internal agency needs and procedures and as a result, sponsors record client service information differently. For example, a few groups report by "number of different clients", but most do not track individuals and merely report "head count," "number and nature of client contacts," or "number of enrollments."

Information for this summary of adult learning services was obtained through reviews of agency reports or personal and telephone interviews with agency officials during June, 1983. Persons interested in more detailed descriptions of adult learning services are referred to a 1975 Colorado study which catalogued public and private sector programs available at that time. The catalogue lists programs by geographic location and topical focus. While somewhat out-dated, the catalogue is the most recent and comprehensive listing available [22].

Vocational School, College and University Continuing Education

Continuing education and community service units of the State's area vocational schools, community and junior colleges, and four-year colleges and universities offer evening and weekend courses for adults. The majority of their learning services are provided through classroom-style instruction. A few institutions offer correspondence study or video instruction. In the past year, several have collaborated with KRMA - Channel 6 to provide academic courses via public broadcast television.

The majority of continuing education courses are offered for academic or vocational school credit, although some carry no credit. With one exception, instructional and administrative costs for four-year college and university continuing education are borne solely by student tuition and fees. The single exception is that Metropolitan State College off-campus credit courses delivered in the Denver area receive state funding. Faculty for higher education courses for adults most often come from the respective institutions'

academic departments, but teach courses on an over-load basis. The Extended Campus Program enacted by the State Legislature in 1982 authorizes some state financial support for higher education academic credit courses for adults, but funds have not yet been appropriated for this purpose.

In contrast, community and junior colleges (most of which are also designated as Area Vocational Schools) receive state appropriations for credit offerings. The appropriations are made through the state's FTE formula, whereby the state and the individual student share costs of instruction and administration of educational programs. Non-credit offerings of community and junior colleges and vocational schools are most often supported solely by student tuition and fees. Some vocational programs receive federal funding, and a few Area Vocational Schools have adult education coordinator positions which are federally financed.

While half of the state's community and junior colleges are located in rural counties, ten of the state's 13 four-year college and university campuses are located along the urban Front Range. Theoretically, higher education adult programs are available state-wide, with each institution responsible for a particular geograohic service area. In reality, service to rural Colorado is limited by travel and associated costs of delivering service to low-density population areas which are distant from campuses.

Governance for post-secondary continuing education comes from many boards (Figure 2). State-wide coordination is the responsibility of the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE).

Community Education and Basic Education for Adults

Community education programs are available in 14% of the state's 181 school districts and offer recreational, personal interest, avocational, and basic academic courses for adults. The 25 school districts with community education programs use local district funds to sponsor professionals who coordinate the programs. No state funds have been provided for community education.

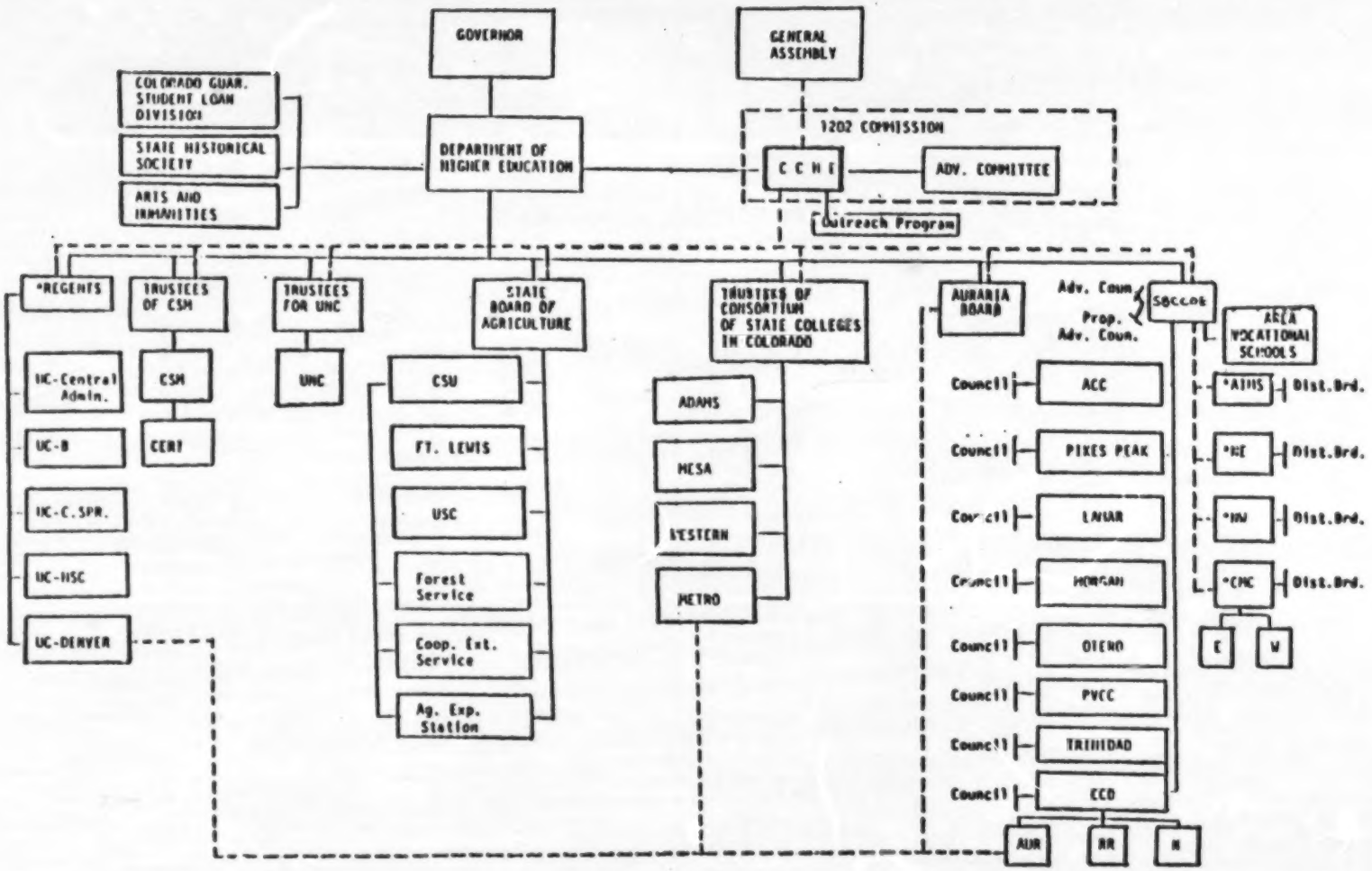
Nine of Colorado's 181 school districts have allocated local funds for adult high school completion programs. In 1983, federal block grant funds for adult basic education were distributed by the Colorado Department of Education to allow 42 organizations to offer English-as-a-second-language (ESL) and primary and secondary-level instruction for adults. Organizational sponsors of these programs included several local school districts and vocational schools, community and junior colleges, and private non-profit organizations.

By Colorado statute, state formula funds for elementary and secondary schools are limited to services provided to students under age 21. Therefore, no state formula funds are available for adult basic education. The state has allocated a small fund for matters related to administration of the General Educational Development (GED) test, a high school equivalency examination.

Cooperative Extension Service

The Extension Service offers adult learning services in such topic areas as agriculture, natural resources, home economics, and community resource development. Services are generally non-formal, employing various methods such as personal and telephone consultations, informational telephone recordings (Extension "Teletips"), group workshops, newsletters, radio broadcasts, and educational brochures.

Figure 2.



*Elected Governing Board
2/1/80

The Extension Service is jointly sponsored by county, state and federal levels of government and is administered through Colorado State University. Approximately one-third of Extension's funding is provided by the state. Extension staff are located in 57 of Colorado's 63 counties, and in academic departments at CSU.

Libraries and Historical Society

It is estimated that about two-thirds of public library borrowers, state-wide, are adults. Dependent on the local facility, libraries offer a range of borrowing privileges and research assistance. A few offer information and guidance for educational and career planning. Libraries are funded through a combination of local, state and federal funds. State-wide oversight is provided by the Colorado Department of Education.

The State Historical Society operates the Heritage Center in Denver and several regional properties. Services include museums, libraries, educational programs and "outreach programs" (e.g., films, informational packets). In 1981-82, approximately 15% of people participating in educational programs of the Historical Society were adults. The Society is financed by several sources including state and federal funds, private grants to local societies, and user fees.

Programs of Other State Agencies

Training for citizens and citizen leaders. Under auspices of the federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Assistance (CETA) program, state and local employment and training offices provide educational experiences for certain under- or unemployed adults. Most programs are financed by federal funds; no state funds are used. State-wide oversight is provided by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment.

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs' Division of Local Governments periodically provides training for local officials and lay leaders. For example, in the past year, workshops were held to inform local officials of 1980 Census results and to provide fiscal management training.

Staff development for public employees. Several state agencies offer learning experiences for public employees, for example: State Health Department training programs for local waste management employees; State Personnel programs for classified and other staff; training for law enforcement and fire fighting officials; training for election judges. State funds are tapped for some of these programs; others are financed by federal and/or local funds.

Publicity About Learning Services

According to a Colorado study, almost half of the state's adults are unaware of places they could go to "receive training or take some kind of educational learning program" [23]. Over half of older, low-income, and Spanish-American adults, especially those with less than 12 years formal education, do not know how to find learning resources. No client oriented state-wide directory of adult learning resources exists, and few communities have attempted comprehensive cataloging and publicizing of local resources. Many educators and professionals in social service agencies have difficulty referring clients because they are unaware of resources or eligibility requirements for programs outside their organizations.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Information presented here implies the existence of a variety of adult learning needs including those related to getting and holding a job, parenting and family responsibilities, civic participation and community problem-solving, and general life enjoyment and life coping.

Adult learning needs and learning services differ from childhood and post-secondary education in several ways. Adults have complex learning needs which reflect the multiple roles they are expected to perform in everyday life. They are not preparing for a time in the future when adult roles must be assumed. Rather, they are emersed in those roles and may find themselves inadequately prepared to meet changing demands. In contrast with youth, they are seldom full-time students. Because of work and family obligations, the time they have for learning is restricted and their ability to participate in traditionally-structured educational programs is limited.

An assortment of public and private sector organizations provide learning services for adults but access to these services is restricted by these factors: (1) awareness of the availability of services, (2) previous formal education experience and course pre-requisites, (3) income or employment status, (4) organizational memberships or employment affiliation, (5) proximity to urban campuses, and (6) user fees.

These observations suggest that, while related, policy questions about adult learning services are somewhat different than those now being asked about youth education (i.e., "how can we improve our schools and teachers?"). State-level policy questions regarding adult learning services emerge when learning needs, learning resources, and a complexity of organizational factors are considered. In the most basic sense, effective provision of services involves the linking or matching of learning resources to learning needs. Because many resources are accessible only through organizations (e.g., colleges, libraries, business-industry), organizational considerations intervene. In the ideal, organizations are intended to aid in the linking process; in reality, there are times when organizational factors interfere with the process. Problems arise when there are inadequate matches between learning needs and resources, or when organizational factors impede, rather than aid, in linking resources with needs.

Because adult learning services that now exist are offered by a number of groups, state policy concerns cannot be approached from a single organization's perspective. Unlike youth education, there is no public institution with primary concern for adult learners.

Policy concerns implied by this report of needs and resources are the subject of a publication, "Policy Options Affecting Adult Learning Resources in Colorado." The report discusses problems which require state policy attention if they are to be resolved, and provides an array of policy approaches, or options, which could be used to resolve problems.

REFERENCE NOTES

[1] Among several references useful for developing conceptual frameworks about adult learning for policy and program development are M. Knowles, The Modern Practice of Adult Education, NY: Association Press, 1971 (2nd Edition); M. Knowles, The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species, Houston: Gulf Publishing, 1973; A. Tough, The Adult's Learning Projects, Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1979 (2nd Edition); R. D. Boyd, J. W. Apps, et al., Redefining the Discipline of Adult Education, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1980; C. B. Aslanian and H. M. Brickell, Americans In Transition, NY: College Entrance Examination Board, 1980; K. P. Cross, Adults As Learners, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981.

[2] Note S. Knop, Policy Options Affecting Adult Learning Services in Colorado, Fort Collins, CO: Colorado Lifelong Learning Project, Sept. 1983.

[3] Demographic profiles are summarized from a Lifelong Learning Project report of 1980 Census data. Note S. Knop, Colorado Population Changes: A Source Book for Education Planners and Policy Makers, Fort Collins, CO: Colorado Lifelong Learning Project, March, 1983.

[4] Note employment trends in Colorado Labor Force Review, Vol. XX, No. 5, May 1983 (Released July, 1983), pp. 2, 3.

[5] Note such references as R. J. Havighurst's classic text on human development, Developmental Tasks and Education, NY: David McKay Co., 1952; Aslanian and Brickell, Americans in Transition (College Examination Board, 1980); and such popular publications as G. Sheehy, Passages, NY: Bantom Books, 1977.

[6] For discussions of community learning as contrasted with individual learning and learning in groups, note Part 3 in Boyd, Apps, et al., Redefining the Discipline of Adult Education (Jossey-Bass, 1980).

[7] Aslanian and Brickel, Americans In Transition (College Entrance Examination Board, 1980), p. 44.

[8] Note Cross's discussion of participation rates and definitions of terms in Adults as Learners, Chapter 3 (Jossey-Bass, 1981).

[9] Aslanian and Brickell, op. cit., Table 49, p.153.

[10] ibid., pp. 100-101.

[11] ibid., Table 51, p. 155.

[12] Cross, op. cit., pp. 53-63.

[13] B. M. Barlow and C. R. Timiraos, Colorado Adult Needs Assessment: Final Technical Report, Denver: Colorado Department of Education and State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education, October 1975, pp. 42-45.

[14] A. Tough, The Adult's Learning Projects, Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1979, p. 6.

[15] Note Cross, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

[16] Ibid., pp. 63-64.

[17] Ibid., pp. 64-66.

[18] Note Aslanian and Brickell, op. cit., pp. 45-47.

[19] Barlow and Timiraos, op. cit., p. 42.

[20] Note Cross, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

[21] Barlow and Timiraos, op. cit., p. 45.

[22] Catalogue of Adult Education Programs, Colorado, Fort Collins, CO: Department of Education, Colorado State University, September, 1975.

[23] Barlow and Timiraos, op. cit., p. 39.

PUBLICATIONS OF THE COLORADO LIFELONG LEARNING PROJECT

(Available at cost of printing, postage, and handling. Order form, reverse side.)

"Issues in Adult Learning and Education," S. Knop, Aug., 1982.

A paper prepared in conjunction with the 5 yr. master planning process for Colorado postsecondary education. Represents a summary of state policy and planning issues in adult and continuing education. Issues are grouped under 3 headings: the purposes of adults' learning and the provision of adult education opportunities; the nature of learning opportunities and education programs; access to education opportunities. Orientation to issues is provided. Questions which focus on broad philosophic and more targeted issues for postsecondary policy and planning are raised. Issues are data-based, stemming from surveys of Colorado educators and lay leaders, and national continuing education research studies.

"The Colorado Case: Experiences and Accomplishments of the Colorado Lifelong Learning Project," S. Knop, Sept., 1982.

Colorado was one of six pilot states in the Education Commission of the States'/W. K. Kellogg Foundation Lifelong Learning Project. The purpose of that project was to enhance state planning and policies in support of adult learning. The case study documents circumstances affecting state-level planning and policy in Colorado. The State's approach to adapting and pursuing ECS project goals is presented. Project activities from mid-May, 1980, through September, 1982, are summarized. Project survey instruments used to determine policy issues and alternatives are included, along with preliminary descriptive survey findings. On-going activities, sponsored by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education are discussed. Insights about processes for planning and policy formulation are highlighted.

"Colorado Population Changes: A Source Book for Education Planners and Policy Makers," S. Knop, March, 1983.

The "Source Book" summarizes changes in the Colorado population, 1970 to 1980, compares these changes with nation-wide trends, and notes regional exceptions to general trends within Colorado. It represents heavy reliance on early releases of group data from the 1980 Census of Population and Housing, and includes 35 tables describing characteristics of the U.S. and Colorado population. Characteristics of greatest interest to educators are reported and discussed (e.g., rural-urban distinctions, age, sex, race and ethnicity, family and household size, income, educational attainment, school enrollment, sector- industry- and occupation of employment, and in-migration). Total population numbers possessing various characteristics, proportions of the 1980 and 1970 population, and percent change 1970 to 1980, are reported. Colorado tables represent the population state-wide, in two different sets of geographic regions, and in the State's 63 counties. A user's guide is included, along with a sample demographic questionnaire which would allow educational survey data to be easily compared with Census tables. The "Source Book" is particularly relevant to those interested in characteristics of the Colorado population; however, those outside Colorado can benefit from a review of U.S. population trends, and may wish to replicate similar studies in their own states.

"Public Opinion Studies: Low-Cost Methods for Soliciting Perspectives of the Public and Special Interest Groups," S. Knop, T. Grieder, and E. Knop, April, 1983.

A paper presented in the Political Science section of the Western States' Social Science Association 25th Annual Meeting, Albuquerque, NM. Abstract: As alternative to political pressure groups, professionals in academic institutions, planning agencies and consulting firms are increasingly called upon by policy makers to provide objective advice on complicated matters of public policy. Insights for policy analysis and formulation can be gathered in a number of ways, among them polling of the public and special interest groups. Common points of skepticism about opinion studies are that: (1) most people are not knowledgeable or interested enough to respond to complex questions, sets of interrelated issues and accompanying trade-offs; (2) to overcome knowledge and interest deficits is too difficult and costly to be frequently undertaken; and (3) the process of polling may result in respondents developing unrealistic expectations. The experiences of a project studying adult education policy in Colorado suggest this skepticism to be unwarranted. Results of study procedures indicate that thoughtful judgments regarding complex matters can be solicited at low cost from members of the public and special interest groups, without heightening potential for conflict or risking unreasonable expectations. Methods which have yielded considerable data and unusually high response rates include two-staged mailed surveys and 'working' conferences. Noteworthy findings include a high degree of agreement about the nature and priority of the state's education problems--between education groups that often must compete for limited funds, and among educator and citizen respondents.

"A Profile of Colorado's Adult Learning Needs and Resources," S. Knop, Sept., 1983.

Summarizes Project findings regarding learning needs of Colorado adults, resources currently available to meet needs, and organizational factors which affect distribution of learning resources. The report is divided into three major sections. First, demographic and socio-economic trends and adult role responsibilities and life transitions which imply learning needs are described. Relationships between individual learning needs and collective learning needs are discussed. Profiles of adults who have a propensity to participate in learning activity are contrasted with profiles of people who are considerably under-represented in learning activities. Second, learning resources currently available to Colorado adults are examined. Private sector resources are commented on; publicly-sponsored resources are described in more detail. Organizational factors which affect adults' access to learning resources are noted. The final section is brief in its treatment of implications of this assessment of needs and resources. Implications are the subject of the Project publication, "Policy Options Affecting Adult Learning Services in Colorado."

"Policy Options Affecting Adult Learning Services in Colorado," S. Knop, Nov., 1983 (Full report and condensed version available).

In a time when educational issues are being raised for public discussion, the report, "Policy Options Affecting Adult Learning Services in Colorado" is intended as a springboard for policy action. The report is written for use by policy makers, educators, and concerned lay citizens as they seek to resolve difficult challenges facing Colorado education and larger society. The report: (1) summarizes issues and problems affecting adult learning services in Colorado; (2) presents policies and policy options that could be pursued to resolve issues and problems; (3) describes policy preferences of several hundred educators and lay civic organizations leaders in the state; and (4) discusses implications for state agencies, educational institutions, governing bodies, and other groups.

ORDER FORM

PUBLICATION	UNIT COST	NUMBER DESIRED	TOTAL COST
Issues in Adult Learning and Education	$1.75	_____	_____
The Colorado Case: Experiences and Accomplishments of the Colorado Lifelong Learning Project	$5.50	_____	_____
Colorado Population Changes: A Source Book for Education Planners and Policy Makers	$8.00	_____	_____
Public Opinion Studies: Low-Cost Methods for Soliciting Perspectives of the Public and Special Interest Groups	$3.25	_____	_____
A Profile of Colorado's Adult Learning Needs and Resources	$2.75	_____	_____
Policy Options Affecting Adult Learning Services in Colorado (Full Report)	$5.50	_____	_____
Policy Options Affecting Adult Learning Services in Colorado (Summary Version; no charge for one complementary copy, additional copies $2.50 each)	$2.50	_____	_____
SUB-TOTAL			_____
(Add 3.5% state sales tax or supply Colorado tax exempt number)			_____
TOTAL			_____

TO ORDER:

Please include this full page order form with check for appropriate amount. Make check payable to the University of Colorado - Boulder. Mail checks with order form to: Dr. Sheila Knop, Lifelong Learning Project, 2608 Avocet Road, Fort Collins, CO 80526 (phone: 303-223-8542).

NAME _____ TITLE _____

INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION _____ PHONE _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

(zip code)

* *

(for office use/return receipt)

Received from: _____ Amount: _____

For: _____

(# copies) (publication title) (# copies) (publication title)

_____

(# copies) (publication title) (# copies) (publication title)

_____

(# copies) (publication title) (# copies) (publication title)

Date: _____ Check: _____ Received by: _____